

Abbett worked directly with Goldman alumna Maureen O'Haren during what turned out to be a historically chaotic budget season. She attended all the state budget hearings, following specific issues for the firm's clients—largely nonprofit organizations, HMOs, and other interested entities that are not specifically health focused. Abbett produced semi-weekly reports of issues not being covered in the newspapers, and after becoming an accredited lobbyist, found herself speaking before the committee.

Abbett felt privileged to witness the budget process and was impressed by the collaborative effort of stakeholders. Her work also gave her a sense for the interconnectedness of seemingly unrelated issues—low income housing, for example, as a public health issue. “The plan of a housing development has a lot to do with how much exercise people get, whether the air they breathe is smoggy, whether it is a stressful place to live,” she says, “and, after paying rent, whether they have enough money left over for health insurance.”



The California State Capitol, Sacramento

Research Partnerships Bridge Cultures to Enhance Community Health

This fall, **Robert Spear, Ph.D.**, professor of environmental health science, will travel to China to be honored by the provincial government of Sichuan with its inaugural Jin Ding Award.

The award will acknowledge Spear's decade-long commitment to understanding and controlling the incidence of schistosomiasis, a debilitating water-borne disease. According to the World Health Organization, schistosomiasis affects 200 million people worldwide and poses a threat to 600 million more in 76 countries.



Robert Spear (left) visits Ertan Dam in Sichuan Province, China, with Gong Peng of Berkeley's College of Natural Resources (right) and a local official.

Spear's collaboration with the Sichuan Institute for Parasitic Disease involves the collection of data using new technologies, such as global positioning systems for mapping and geographic information systems for managing epidemiological and ecological data in an integrated data model. The work is of increasing relevance in China because of the construction of the Three Gorges Dam, which will create new waterway links between previously isolated areas of schistosomiasis infection.



Korean-language information brochures encourage women to be screened for breast and cervical cancer.

In another research collaboration, the CDC-funded “Health is Strength” Korean Women's Health Project connects the school's Center for Family and Community Health with Asian Health Services, a Bay Area nonprofit. The project's goal is to investigate the ability of culturally sensitive, community-empowering interventions to improve breast and cervical cancer screening practices among Korean women in Alameda County.

Center director **Joel Moskowitz, Ph.D.**, along with his colleagues on campus and at Asian Health Services, has collaborated closely with the Korean community, meeting regularly with an advisory board since 1993 to explore culturally appropriate ways of increasing effectiveness. With their input, the project team has developed bilingual educational materials and presentations on issues of women's health. Team members have worked hard to establish relationships with Korean churches, where volunteer health counselors are enlisted to host informational gatherings and offer friendly prompting to fellow congregants. They have incorporated some use of Korean print media and are involved in an exciting new website project with the Korean Community Center of the East Bay, creating content for the health pages of their “virtual village.” 🏡